



Josefina López was born on March 19, 1969 in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Her family moved to Los Angeles when she was five. For almost 13 years they lived in East Los Angeles illegally until they obtained 'amnesty.' She attended Los Angeles County High School for the Arts where she majored in Theatre. She was a member of the Young Playwrights Lab at the Los Angeles Theatre Center, and she wrote her first play, the Emmy-winning *Simply Maria or the American Dream*, at the age of 17.

Currently the most produced Latina playwright in the country, Ms. López says that frustration over the lack of Latino voices in in theatre inspired her to write her first play. "I hope to give Latinas an opportunity to play characters that have dignity and courage, qualities that are representative of who we are." Be sure to look for these other fine plays by Josefina López: *Real Women Have Curves*, *Unconquered Spirits*, *Confessions of Women from East L.A.*, *Food for the Dead*, *La Pinta*, and *Confessions*... (a one-woman show).

## REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES

A Comedy

by

JOSEFINA LOPEZ



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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(REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES)

*Cover design by Susan Carle*

ISBN 0-87129-725-6

**REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES**

is dedicated to the women on whom these characters are loosely based, my mother Catalina Perales and my sister Esther López, S. Orbach, the author of Fat is a Feminist Issue, and to all the undocumented and now documented garment workers of Los Angeles.

*REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES* was first presented by El Teatro De La Esperanza at the Mission Cultural Center in San Francisco, California, May 25, 1990. The production was directed by Hector Correa; set design by Kate Boyd; light design by Elaine Buckholtz; costume design by Anastasia Powers. The cast was as follows:

ANA ..... Francine Torres  
 ESTELA ..... Jennifer Proctor  
 CARMEN ..... Marta Del Rio  
 PANCHA ..... Tessa Koning-Martinez  
 ROSALI ..... Miraida Ríos

### Acknowledgments

Special thanks to: God, Catalina and Rosendo López, Keisuke Fukuda, Bill Virchis, Lupe Ontiveros, Irene Fornes, Emilio Carballido, Susana Tubert, Toni Curiel, Jorge Huerta, Jon Mercedes III, Luis Valdez, Sara Valdovinos, Angelica López, Esther López, Teresa Marrero, Carmen Roman, INTAR, LATC, El Teatro De La Esperanza, University of California San Diego Theater Dept., The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, El Teatro Bilingue de Houston, The Seattle Group Theater, Asolo Center for the Performing Arts, Victory Gardens Theater, Dallas Theater Center, The San Diego Repertory Theater, Borderlands Theater, Repertorio Español, and Spelman College.

## REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES

### Playwright's Notes

When I was very young my best friend and I were walking to the corner store. My parents had warned me not to tell anyone I didn't have "papers" and to be careful walking the streets. On the way to the store we saw "la migra" (INS/immigration/Border Patrol). I quickly turned to my friend and tried to "act white." I spoke in English and talked about Jordache jeans and Barbie dolls hoping no one would suspect us. When I finally got my legal residence card, I remembered this incident knowing that I would never have to hide and be afraid again. I also laughed at my *naivete* and fear because what I had thought was *la migra* was only the L.A. Police Meter Maid.

In 1987 the Simpson-Rodino Amnesty Law, designed to stop the influx of undocumented people entering the country, granted thousands of undocumented people living in the U.S. since 1982 legal residency. This was an opportunity of a lifetime. However, thousands, not trusting the government, hesitated to apply, fearing this was a scheme to deport them. They, like me, couldn't believe that after hiding and being persecuted for so long they were finally going to have the freedom to live and work in this country.

I got my residence card soon after I graduated from high school and was then able to apply to college. I had been accepted to New York University, but I had to wait a year to be eligible for financial aid. During this year I worked at McDonald's, but I hated it. Then, desperate for a new job, I asked my sister to let me work at her tiny sewing factory. I worked there for five months and my experiences at the factory served as inspiration for *REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES*. At the factory there were a few Latina women, all older than me. They liked working for my sister because she

## REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES

wasn't stingy. We spent so much time together working, sweating and laughing, that we bonded. I remember feeling blessed that I was a woman because male bonding could never compare with what happens when women work together. We had something special and I wanted to show the world.

In the U.S. undocumented people are referred to as "illegal aliens" which conjures up in our minds the image of extraterrestrial beings who are not human, who do not bleed when they're cut, who do not cry when they feel pain, who do not have fears, dreams and hopes...Undocumented people have been used as scapegoats for so many of the problems in the U.S., from drugs and violence, to the economy. I hope that someday this country recognizes the very important contributions of undocumented people and remembers that they too came to this country in search of a better life.

Josefina López  
Los Angeles  
March, 1992

## REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES

A Full-length Play  
For Five Women

### CHARACTERS

ANA ..... 18, plump and pretty, sister of Estela, daughter of Carmen. She is a recent high school graduate and a young feminist

ESTELA .... 24, plump, plain-looking, owner of the "Garcia Sewing Factory"

CARMEN .... 48, a short, large woman, mother of Ana and Estela. She has a talent for storytelling

PANCHA ..... 32, a huge woman who is very mellow in her ways, but quick with her tongue

ROSALI ... 29, only a bit plump in comparison to the rest of the women. She is sweet and easygoing

### SETTING:

A tiny sewing factory in East Los Angeles.

### TIME:

The first week of September 1987.

NOTE: Words in Spanish are in bold print. You will find a glossary and Spanish terms in the back of the play.

## REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES

### SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

#### ACT ONE

- Scene 1: Monday morning, September 7, 1987, about 7:00 a.m.
- Scene 2: A few hours later, about 11:30 a.m.
- Scene 3: A few hours later, about 3:45 p.m.
- Scene 4: The following day, about 7:10 a.m.
- Scene 5: Later the same day. Late afternoon.

#### ACT TWO

- Scene 1: Wednesday, September 9th, about 8:15 a.m.
- Scene 2: Thursday, September 10th, about 2:00 a.m.
- Scene 3: Same day, about 2:00 p.m.
- Scene 4: Friday, September 11th, about 2:25 p.m.

### ACT ONE

#### SCENE ONE

*AT RISE: The stage becomes visible. The clock on the wall shows it is 6:59 a.m. Keys are heard outside the door. The door opens. ANA and CARMEN enter. ANA drags herself in, goes directly to the electricity box and switches it on. Automatically all the machines "hummmm" loudly. The lights turn on at different times. The radio also blasts on with a song in Spanish. CARMEN quickly turns off the radio. She puts her lunch on the table. ANA slumps on a machine. CARMEN then gets a broom and uses it to get a mousetrap from underneath the table. She prays that today will be the day she caught the mouse. She sees the mouse-trap empty and is very disappointed.*

CARMEN. ¡Pinche rata! I'll get you. (CARMEN returns the broom. She takes two dollars from her purse, approaches ANA and presents them to her.) Ten. Go to the bakery.

ANA. No. I want to go back to sleep!

CARMEN. ¡Huevona! If we don't help your sister who else is going to? She already works all hours of the night trying to finish the dresses. Por fin she's doing something productive with her life.

ANA. I know I'm trying to be supportive, ayy! I don't want to go to the bakery. I don't want any bread.

CARMEN. That's good, at least you won't get fatter.

ANA. ¡Amá!

CARMEN. I only tell you for your own good. Bueno, I'll go get the bread myself, but you better not get any when I bring it. (*CARMEN walks to the door.*) Ana, don't forget to close the doors. This street is full of winos and drug addicts. And don't you open the door to any strangers!

ANA. Yeah, yeah, I know! I'm not a kid. (*ANA locks both doors with a key. She goes toward the toilet and turns on the water in the sink. ANA splashes water on her face to awaken. She sticks her hand behind the toilet seat and gets out a notebook and a pen. Spotlight on ANA. She sits and writes the following:*) Monday, September 7, 1987...I don't want to be here! I only come because my mother practically drags me out of bed and into the car and into the factory. She pounds on the...No...(Scratches "pounds.") She knocks on...No...(She scratches "knocks.") She pounds on the garage wall, and since I think it's an earthquake, I run out. Then she catches me and I become her prisoner...Is it selfish of me not to want to wake up every morning at 6:30 a.m., Saturdays included, to come work here for 67 dollars a week? Oh, but such is the life of a Chicana in the garment industry. Cheap labor...I've been trying to hint to my sister for a raise, but she says I don't work fast enough for her to pay me minimum wage...The weeks get longer and I can't believe I've ended up here. I just graduated from high school...Most of my friends are in college...It's as if I'm going backwards. I'm doing the work that mostly illegal aliens do...(Scratches "illegal aliens.") No, "undocumented workers"...or else it sounds like these people come from Mars...Soon I will have my "Temporary Residence Card," then after two years, my green card...I'm happy to finally be legal, but I thought things would be different...What I really want to do is write...

CARMEN (*off, interrupting*). Ana, open the door! (*CARMEN pounds on the door outside. ANA quickly puts her writing away and goes to open the door.*) Hurry up! There's a wino following me! (*ANA gets the keys and unlocks both doors.*) Hurry! He's been following me from the bakery.

(*ANA opens the first door. CARMEN is behind the bar door and is impatiently waiting for ANA to open it. ANA opens the door. CARMEN hurries in nervously. ANA quickly shuts the doors. ANA looks out the window.*)

ANA. Amá, that's not a wino, it's an "Alelullah"!

CARMEN. But he was following me!

ANA. I know, those witnesses don't give up. (*CARMEN puts the bag of bread on the table. She fills a small pot with water and puts it on the little hot plate to boil the water for coffee.*)

CARMEN. Pos yo ya no veo. I can't see a thing. (*CARMEN goes to her purse and takes out her glasses. She puts them on. She looks out the window and sees no one.*) I should retire and be an abuelita by now, taking care of grandchildren...I don't know why I work, I have arthritis in my hands, I'm losing my sight from all this sewing, and this arm, I can hardly move it anymore...(ANA does not pay attention as usual.)

ANA (*unsympathetically*). Yeah, Amá.

CARMEN. I wonder where's Estela. She should have been here by now.

ANA. I thought she left the house early.

(*PANCHA appears behind the bar door.*)

PANCHA. Buenos días, Doña Carmen. Can you open the door?

CARMEN. Buenos días, Pancha. ¿Cómo está?

PANCHA. Not too bad.

CARMEN. Que bien. I brought my mole today for all of us.

PANCHA. You're so generous, Doña Carmen.

CARMEN. It was in the 'frigerator for three days, and I thought it was turning green, so I brought it. Why let it go to waste?

PANCHA. Is it still good?

CARMEN. Of course, I make great mole.

*(ROSALI appears behind the bar door.)*

ROSALI. Doña Carmen, the door.

CARMEN. It's open, Rosalí. Buenos días. How are you?

ROSALI *(entering)*. Okay, like always, Doña Carmen.

CARMEN. I brought my mole for all of us.

ROSALI. Did you? Ayy, gracias, but remember I'm on a diet.

CARMEN. Just try a small taco, no te va hacer daño. Try it.

ROSALI. I'm sure it's delicious, but I'm this close to being a size seven.

CARMEN. Sí. You're looking thinner now. How are you doing it?

ROSALI. I'm on a secret diet...It's from the Orient.

CARMEN. A-ha...It's true, those Japanese women are always skinny. Pues, give me your secret, Rosalí. Maybe this way I can lose this ball of fat! *(She squeezes her stomach.)* No mas mira que parezco. You can't even see my waist anymore. But you know what it really is. It's just water. After having so many babies I just stopped getting rid of the water. It's as if I'm clogged. *(ROSALI and ANA laugh.)*

ROSALI. Sí, Doña Carmen.

ANA. Yeah, sure, Amá!

CARMEN. ¿Y tu? Why do you laugh? You're getting there yourself. When I was your age I wasn't as fat as you. And look at your chichis.

ANA. ¡Amá!

CARMEN *(grabs ANA's breasts as if weighing them)*. They must weigh five pounds each.

ANA. Amá, don't touch me like that!

ROSALI. Where's Estela?

CARMEN. We don't know. Ana, I think you better call home now and check if she's there.

ROSALI. Because her torment is outside washing his car.

ALL. He is?

*(From under a large blanket on the floor ESTELA jumps out. The WOMEN are startled and scream, but they quickly join her as she runs to the window to spy on her Tormento.)*

ESTELA. ¡Ayy que buenote! He's so cute.

ANA. Don't exaggerate.

ESTELA. ¡Mi Tormento! ¡O mi Tormento!

CARMEN. We thought you left home early.

ESTELA. No, I worked so late last night I decided to sleep here.

CARMEN. Then why didn't you tell us when—

ESTELA. I heard you come in, but I wanted to listen in on your chisme about me, Amá.

CARMEN. Me? I don't gossip!

ESTELA. Sure, Amá...I'm going to the store. *(ESTELA runs to the mirror.)*

PANCHA. I don't know why you bother, all he cares about is his car.

CARMEN. Venganse, I think the water is ready. *(The WOMEN gather around the table for coffee. PANCHA and CARMEN grab bread. ESTELA goes to the bathroom and brushes her hair, puts on lipstick, then she puts on a girdle under her skirt, which she has great trouble getting on, but she is determined. She grabs a deodorant stick and applies it. She also gets a bottle of perfume and sprays it accordingly.)*

ESTELA. Aquí por si me abraza. *(She sprays her wrist.)*

ANA *(mocks ESTELA in front of the WOMEN)*. Here in case he hugs me.

ESTELA. Aquí por si me besa. *(She sprays her neck.)*

ANA. Here in case he kisses me.

ESTELA. Y aquí por si se pasa. *(She sprays under her skirt.)*

ANA. And here in case he...you know what. *(The WOMEN are by the door and windows looking out. ESTELA comes out of the bathroom.)*

ROSALI. He's gone.

CARMEN. Sí, ya se fue.

ESTELA. No! Are you sure? *(ESTELA goes toward the door, before she reaches it CARMEN shuts the door.)*

CARMEN *(scared)*. ¡Dios mio! *(CARMEN quickly takes a drink of her coffee and can hardly breathe afterwards.)*

ESTELA. ¿Qué? ¿Amá, qué pasa?

CARMEN. I saw a van!

ROSALI. What van?

CARMEN. ¡La migra! *(All the WOMEN scatter and hide waiting to be discovered. Then after a few seconds PANCHA makes a realization.)*

PANCHA. Pero, why are we hiding? We're all legal now.

CARMEN. ¡Ayy, de veras! I forget! All those years of being an ilegal, I still can't get used to it.

PANCHA. Me too! *(She picks up a piece of bread.)* I think I just lost my appetite.

ROSALI. I'm not scared of it! I used to work in factories and whenever they did a raid, I'd always sneak out through the bathroom window, y ya.

ANA. Last night I heard on the news that la migra patrol is planning to raid a lot of places.

PANCHA. They're going to get mean trying to enforce that Amnesty law.

ANA. Thank God, I'm legal. I will never have to lie on applications anymore, except maybe about my weight...

ROSALI. ¿Saben qué? Yesterday I got my first credit card.

CARMEN. ¿Pos cómo le hiciste? How?

ROSALI. I lied on the application and I got an Americana Express.

ANA. And now you have two green cards and you never leave home without them. *(ANA laughs her head off, but none of the WOMEN get the joke. ANA slowly shuts up.)*

PANCHA. Doña Carmen, let those men in their van come! Who cares? We're all legal now! *(PANCHA goes to the door and opens it all the way. They all smile in relief and pride, then ESTELA, who has been stuffing her face, finally speaks up.)*

ESTELA. I'm not. *(PANCHA slams the door shut.)*

EVERYONE. You're not?!!!

ANA. But you went with me to get the fingerprints and the medical examination.

ESTELA. I didn't send them in.

ROSALI. But you qualify.

ESTELA. I have a criminal record.

EVERYONE. No!



ESTELA. So I won't apply until I clear it.

CARMEN. Estela, what did you do?

PANCHA. ¿Qué hiciste?

ESTELA. Well, actually, I did two things.

CARMEN. Two?! ¿Y por qué no me habías dicho? Why is the mother always the last one to know?

ESTELA. Because one is very embarrassing—

CARMEN. ¡Aver dime, condenada! What have you done?

ESTELA. I was arrested for illegal possession of—

ROSALI. Marijuana?!

PANCHA. A gun?!

ESTELA. A lobster.

EVERYONE. No!

ESTELA. Out of season!

CARMEN. ¡Mentirosa!

WOMEN. You're kidding!

ESTELA. A-ha! I'm not lying! I almost got handcuffed and taken to jail. Trying to "abduct" a lobster is taken very seriously in Santa Monica Beach. They wanted me to appear in court and I never did.

PANCHA. That's not a serious crime; ¿de qué te apuras? Why worry?

CARMEN (*not amused*). That was the first crime? You mentioned two.

ESTELA. I'm being sued for not keeping up with my payments on the machines.

ANA. Y los eight thousand dollars you got from your accident settlement weren't enough?

CARMEN. But I thought that everything was paid for.

ESTELA. I used most of it for a down-payment, but I still needed a new steam iron, the over-lock...I thought I could make the monthly payments if everything went as planned.

CARMEN. ¿Pos qué paso?

PANCHA. What happened?

ESTELA. You know that we never finish on time. So the Glitz company doesn't pay me until we do.

ROSALI. Pero the orders are too big. We need at least two more seamstresses.

ESTELA. Pues sí. But the money they pay me is not enough to hire any more help. So because we get behind, they don't pay, I can't pay you, and I can't pay those pigs that sold me those machines.

CARMEN. Ayyy, Estela, how much do you owe?

ESTELA. Two thousand dollars...

CARMEN. ¡Hora si que estamos bien jodidas! (*The WOMEN sigh hopelessly.*)

ESTELA. ...I tried. I sent some money and explained the situation to them two weeks ago, but I got a letter from their lawyer. They're taking me to court...

PANCHA. So you had money two weeks ago? Hey, hey, you told us you couldn't pay us because you didn't have any money. You had money! Here we are bien pobres, I can't even pay for the bus sometimes, and you care more about your machines than us.

ESTELA. They're going to take everything!

ROSALI. ¿¿Qué?!

ESTELA. They're going to repossess everything if I don't pay them. And if I appear in court they'll find out that I don't have any papers.

ANA. Then why don't you apply for Amnesty?

ESTELA. Because I won't get it if they find out about my lawsuit.

ANA. You don't know that. Estela, you should talk to this lawyer I know..

ESTELA. Ana, you know I can't afford a lawyer!

CARMEN. Ayy, Estela, ¡ya ni la friegas! (*ESTELA fights the urge to cry.*)

ROSALI. If I had money I'd lend it to you.

PANCHÁ (*aside*). I wouldn't.

ROSALI (*kindly*). But I don't have any money because you haven't paid me.

ESTELA. Miren, the Glitz company has promised to pay me for the last two weeks and this week if we get the order in by Friday.

ANA. How much of the order is left?

ESTELA. About 100 dresses.

PANCHÁ. N'ombre. By this Friday? What do they think we are? Machines?

ESTELA. But they're not that difficult! Amá, you're so fast. This would be a cinch for you. All you have to do are the blusas on the dresses. Rosalí, the over-lock work is simple. It's a lot, but you're the best at it. And, Pancha, all you have to do is sew the skirts. The skirts are the easiest to sew. Now, Ana, with you doing all the ironing, we'll get it done by Friday. You see if we do little by little at what we do best...¡Andenle! We can do it. ¿Verá que sí, Ana?

ANA (*uncertain*). Sure we can.

ESTELA. ¿Vera que sí, Amá?

CARMEN. Pos we can try.

ROSALI. Estela, we can do it. (*ESTELA looks to PANCHÁ. PANCHÁ remains quiet. CARMEN breaks their stare.*)

CARMEN. Wouldn't it be funny if the migra came and instead of taking the employees like they usually do, they take the patrona. (*The WOMEN laugh at the thought.*)

ESTELA. Don't laugh! It could happen. (*The WOMEN become silent.*)

CARMEN. Ayy, Estela, I'm just kidding. I'm just trying to make you feel better. (*Beat.*)

ROSALI. Bueno, let's try to be serious...I'll do the zippers.

ESTELA. Yes, por favor. And, Pancha, please do the hems on the skirts.

PANCHÁ. The machine is not working.

ESTELA. Not again! (*ESTELA goes to the machine. She fusses around with it trying to make it work. With confidence.*) There. It should be ready. Try it. (*PANCHÁ sits down on a chair and tries the machine. She steps on the pedal and the machine makes an awful noise. Then it shoots off electric sparks and explodes. PANCHÁ quickly gets away from the machine. The WOMEN hide under the machines.*)

WOMEN. ¡Ay, ay, ay!

ESTELA. Augghh! All this equipment is junk! (*ESTELA throws a thread spool at the machine and it explodes again.*) I was so stupid to buy this factory! (*ESTELA fights the urge to cry in frustration. The WOMEN stare at her helplessly.*)

CARMEN. Pos no nos queda otra. Pancha, can you do the hems by hand?

PANCHÁ. Bueno, I guess I have to.

ESTELA. Gracias...Ana, turn on the iron, I'm going to need you to do the ironing all this week...Tell me when the iron gets hot and I'll show you what you have to do.

CARMEN. I'll help Rosalí with the zippers.

ESTELA. No...I need you to do the blusas on size 7/8.

CARMEN. Didn't I already do them?

ESTELA. No.

CARMEN. I guess it was size 13/14 then.

ESTELA. You couldn't have, because there is no size 13/14 for this dress style, Amá.

CARMEN. No?...Hoye did you get any more pink thread from the Glitz?

ESTELA. Oh, no. I forgot...Go ahead and use the over-lock machine. That is already set up with thread.

ANA. What does the over-lock do?

ROSALI. It's what keeps the material from coming apart.  
(ROSALI shows ANA.)

CARMEN. Why don't you give me the pink thread from the over-lock machine, then when you get the thread you can set it up again?

ESTELA. No. I don't know how to set it up on that new machine.

CARMEN. Rosalí can do that later. She knows how to do it; qué no, Rosalí?

ROSALI. Sí, Doña Carmen.

ESTELA. Why don't you just do what I'm asking you to do?

CARMEN. Estela, no seas terca. I know what I'm telling you.

ESTELA. So do I. I want to do things differently. I want us to work like an assembly line.

CARMEN. Leave that to the big factories. I've been working long enough to know—

ESTELA. I haven't been working long enough, but I'm intelligent enough to—

CARMEN. Estela, my way is better!

ESTELA. Why do you think your way is better? All my life your way has been better. Maybe that's why my life is so screwed up!

CARMEN. ¡Desgraciada! I'm only doing it to help you!

ESTELA. Because you know I won't be getting married any time soon so you want to make sure I'm doing something productive with my life so I can support myself. I don't need your help! (Beat.)

CARMEN. Where did all that come from? I thought we were arguing about the thread.

ESTELA. You know what I mean. You know I'm right!

CARMEN. All right. If you want me to do the over-lock work I'll do it...I have to remember I work for you now.

ESTELA. Amá, don't give me that!

CARMEN. What?

ESTELA. Guilt!

CARMEN. Well, it's true! It's not usual that a mother works for her daughter. So I have to stop being your mother and just be a regular employee that you can boss around and tell what to do.

ESTELA. ¡Ayy, Amá, parele! You are my mother, but sometimes you get out of line. How can I tell Rosalí and Pancha to stop gossiping when it's you who initiates the chisme? You're a bad example!

CARMEN. Ay, sí. Blame me! ¡Echame la culpa! You gossip too when it's convenient.

ESTELA. Look, Amá, I don't want to argue with you anymore. I'm frustrated enough by the thought that I might get deported, at the sight of that machine, and at the thought that I am the biggest fool for buying all this junk. So I don't need my mother to make my life any worse! (Beat.)

CARMEN. So what are we going to do about the thread?

ESTELA. ¡Oiiiiii! And we're back to the same thing! (She goes to the over-lock machine and angrily tears a thread spool from the machine and throws it at CARMEN.) Here! ¡Tenga! (The thread spool misses CARMEN by a hair.)

CARMEN (dramatically). ¡Pegame, pegame! Go ahead! Hit me! God's gonna punish you for enojona!

ANA. Estela, the iron is ready.

ESTELA. Amá, give me a finished dress from the box.

CARMEN. Where are they?

ESTELA. Right next to you by the pile.

CARMEN. Qué size?

ESTELA. For the mannequin.

CARMEN. What size is it?

ROSALI. It's a size seven, Doña Carmen.

CARMEN (*sarcastically*). Thank you, Rosali. (*CARMEN digs into the box and gets a dress. She gives it to ESTELA who begins to iron the dress carefully.*)

ESTELA (*to ANA*). Pay close attention to how I'm ironing this dress. Always, always use the steam. And don't burn the tul, por favor. On the skirt just a couple of strokes to make it look decent. It's real easy, just don't burn the tul, okay?

ANA. Okay.

ESTELA. Check the water, and when it gets low...Tell me so I can send you to buy some more water for it.

ANA. Why do you have to buy the water?

ESTELA. Because regular water is too dirty, it needs distilled water for clean steam. (*ESTELA finishes ironing the dress. She shakes it a bit then puts it on the mannequin. All the WOMEN stare at the dress.*)

ROSALI. Que bonito. How I would like to wear a dress like that.

PANCHÁ. But first you have to turn into a stick to wear something like that.

ROSALI. Yeah, but they're worth it.

ANA. How much do they pay us for making these dresses?

ROSALI. Estela, we get thirteen dollars for these, no?

ANA. Oh, yeah? How much do they sell them for at the stores?

ESTELA. They tell me they sell them at Bloomingdale's for about two hundred dollars.

WOMEN. ¡¡¿Qué?!!

ANA. Dang!! (*Lights fade.*)

## SCENE TWO

AT RISE: *Lights come on. The WOMEN are busy working. The "Cucaracha" is played on the horn by the lunch mobile outside announcing its arrival.*

ANA. Okay, there's the lonchera. Anybody want anything for lunch?

CARMEN. The lonchera is here already?

ESTELA. Ana, just hurry back.

ROSALI. Can you get me something to drink? How much are those tomato juices?

ANA. A V-8?

ROSALI. Sí, eso.

ANA. I think they're 80 cents. You want anything else?

ROSALI. No, no, I'm not hungry.

ESTELA. Ana, lend me a dollar.

ANA. What do you think I am? A bank? This is the third time. One can only go so far on 67 dollars a week.

ESTELA. Ana, if you are not happy here go back to working at McDonald's.

ANA. I would...(CARMEN stares at ANA.)...But...You still want to borrow the dollar?

ESTELA. Are you going to charge me interest?

ANA. Of course. What do you want me to buy you?

ESTELA. A burrito de chicharrón.

ANA. Pancha, do you want anything?

PANCHÁ. Sí. Bring me four tacos.

CARMEN. Pancha, aren't you going to want some of my mole?

PANCHÁ. Ana, bring me three tacos, no más. (*PANCHÁ gives ANA money.*)

ESTELA. Ana, if you have money left, could you buy some distilled water at the corner store?

ANA. Anything else, boss? *(ANA leaves to buy the food. CARMEN waits until ESTELA shuts the door.)*

CARMEN. Bueno, if we are already going to hell for being a bunch of chismosas, there's no use in hiding it any longer. *(CARMEN digs into a pile of dresses and takes out a book. She shows it to PANCHA and ROSALI. CARMEN whispers.) ¡Miren! (ROSALI quickly sees the illustrations on the front cover and is shocked.)*

ROSALI. Doña Carmen!

CARMEN. I was cleaning the garage and I found a whole pile of dirty books. I think they belong to my oldest son.

PANCHA. What's the book called?

ROSALI *(reading title)*. Two Hundred Sexual Positions Illustrated.

PANCHA. I didn't know there were so many. *(ROSALI and PANCHA gather around CARMEN to look at the book. ESTELA has not noticed them. Instead she notices a letter being dropped in the mail slot. ESTELA reads the letter.)*

ROSALI *(shocked)*. Ay, Dios, how can these women do this?

PANCHA. They're probably gymnasts.

CARMEN. The photographer must have used a special lens on this picture.

PANCHA. Which picture?

CARMEN. The one on page 69.

ROSALI. I didn't know people could do that.

PANCHA. ¡Hijole! Imagine if you had married this man, and you had never seen him until your wedding night.

CARMEN. ¡N'ombre, ni lo mande dios! How it hurt with a regular one.

PANCHA. Mire, Doña Carmen. This woman looks like you, but that doesn't stop her.

CARMEN. Ahh. She's so big. No le da verguenza.

ROSALI. I didn't know they had large women in porno books.

PANCHA. I guess some men enjoy watching big women.

ESTELA *(sees them looking at the book)*. What are you looking at? You're suppose to be working! The food has not gotten here yet.

PANCHA. Estela, come look. It's a dirty book.

ESTELA. Why are you looking at that?

CARMEN. Estela, no mas ven a ver. *(ESTELA hesitates, but is curious and gives in. She sees the pictures of the large women and is shocked.)*

ESTELA. People this fat shouldn't be having sex! Ichhh!

ROSALI. Look, Estela, there's a guy in here that looks like your "Tormento."

ESTELA. Where?!! *(ROSALI shows her, then suddenly the door is kicked open.)* Aughhhhhh!!!!

*(ANA enters with her hands full of food.)*

PANCHA. Estela, calm down.

ESTELA. I thought it was la migra!

ANA. Sorry! I kicked the door open because my hands are full...

ESTELA. From now on these doors are to remain closed and locked at all times, okay? If you go outside, you knock on the door like this...*(She knocks in code rhythm.)*...so we know it's just one of us. Don't ever kick the door again.

ANA. Isn't that going a bit to extremes?

PANCHA. Vamos a estar como gallinas enjauladas.

ESTELA. No. We just have to be careful.

ROSALI. So how do you do the knock?

ESTELA (*exemplifies*). Knock once. Pause. Then knock twice. Then repeat.

ANA. Well, if it makes you feel better...

ESTELA. Yes, it would.

ANA. All right. Here's the food. (*ANA places the food on the table.*)

ESTELA. Did you remember the water?

ANA. Yeah, I brought the water! (*ANA gives the bottle of water to ESTELA and distributes the food. To the WOMEN:*) What were you doing?

ALL (*hiding the book*). Nothin'.

ANA. What are you hiding?

ALL. Nothin'. (*Pause.*)

PANCHA. We don't want to pervert you.

ANA. You don't want to pervert me more than I've already perverted you?

ROSALI. It's a dirty book.

ANA. Let me see it.

CARMEN. No! You're too young to be looking at these things.

ANA. Fine. You've seen them once, you've seen it all.

PANCHA. Ana!

CARMEN. ¿Qué? Repeat what you just said. Don't tell me you've been "messing around."

ANA. No. It's just that I probably know more than most of you and you're thinking that you can pervert me. Stuuuuu-piiid!!

CARMEN. And how is it that you know so much if you haven't done it?

ANA. ...I read a lot.

PANCHA. But not because you read a lot means you know what's what.

ANA. Go ahead. Ask me anything you always wanted to know about sex but were afraid to ask. I'll tell you. (*All the WOMEN are tempted.*)

ROSALI. How do you masturbate...? (*PANCHA, CARMEN, and ESTELA stare at ROSALI in shock.*)

ANA. What?

CARMEN. ¡Hijole! If your Apá were to hear you...¡Hijole!

ANA. I wouldn't be talking like this in front of my father.

CARMEN. Can you believe her? Girls nowadays think they know so much that's why they end up panzonas.

ANA. No. They end up pregnant because they don't use contraceptives.

PANCHA. Are you sure all you do is read a lot?

CARMEN. Your husband's not going to like you knowing so much.

PANCHA. A girl shouldn't know so much.

ANA. I'm not a girl, I'm a woman.

PANCHA. Uuy, uy, la Miss Know-it-all.

CARMEN. In my day, a girl became a woman when she lost her virginity.

ANA. That was then. I read somewhere that calling someone a "girl" is just as bad as when white men used to call black men—

CARMEN (*starts to laugh uncontrollably*). I...I...remember...

ESTELA. Amá, it's 12:20, no more stories. If we gossip people are gonna hear everything outside and even if we close the doors they'll know it's a sewing factory because only women talking chisme can sound like chickens cackling.

CARMEN. But it's what I know how to do best, my reason for living.

ESTELA. I'm begging you. (*CARMEN remains quiet for a few seconds then she begins to laugh uncontrollably again.*)

PANCHA. Why are you laughing? (*CARMEN continues laughing, unable to speak.*)

ANA. ¿Amá, qué le píso? (*The laughter is contagious.*)

CARMEN. I just got a back flash of when I lost my virginity.

ANA. That bad, huh?

CARMEN. The night I eloped with your father on the bike...

ESTELA. Bueno, if the migra deports me we know whose fault it is. Amá, no work, no money, no factory! Is that clear enough?!

CARMEN. Pero, don't get upset. Estela, it's lunch time.

PANCHA. Pues sí.

ESTELA. It gets me so annoyed to hear her talk and talk... And with all the work we have! Just promise me that you'll finish, all right? I'll stop bothering you if you can do that.

WOMEN (*look to each other*). Pues bueno. We promise.

ESTELA. If not you'll go to hell?!

WOMEN (*look to each other again and think about it*). Pues bueno.

CARMEN. Sí, sí, sí, we'll go to hell. Can I continue? Okay, pues after riding on his bike for so long, I had to pee so bad! So we stopped in the mountains somewhere. I ran behind a tree, squatted, and just peed. That night, after we got settled, I didn't know what was going to happen. After we did it, I started itching and scratching down there 'til my *cuchupeta* got so red. I thought something was wrong, but I asked him and he said it was suppose to hurt and bleed. Then I found out it wasn't him. I had peed on poison ivy. And how it hurt! (*The WOMEN laugh sympathetically and*

*slowly gather around the table to eat.*) Panchita, try some of my mole.

PANCHA (*looking at mole*). But, Doña Carmen, it's green.

CARMEN. It's green mole...Ana, you didn't try some mole.

It's real good.

ANA. No way! It looks like...yukkkk!

CARMEN. Aver, Rosalí, come try some. There's plenty.

ROSALI. Thank you, pero, I'm not hungry.

CARMEN. But you haven't eaten anything.

ROSALI. I drink eight glasses of water a day and I don't feel hungry. Water gets rid of the fat.

CARMEN. Ana, you should be drinking eight waters.

ANA. And you should too...Oh no, you get clogged.

ESTELA. Amá, just be very careful with the mole. I don't want any of the dresses getting stained. (*PANCHA scoops some mole with a piece of tortilla. She eats the scoop.*)

CARMEN. You like it, Pancha?

PANCHA (*lying*). Yeah, it's real good, Doña Carmen... (*ROSALI carefully strays away from the table and drinks her V-8. ROSALI swallows a pill. She goes to the window and peeks out through the curtain. She spots el Tormento outside.*)

ROSALI. ¡Míralo! There's Andrés! Estela, come to the window! Your Tormento is outside! (*PANCHA, CARMEN, and ANA run to the window, beating ESTELA.*)

ESTELA. No, don't go to the window! Get away from the window!

ANA. No one can see us!

ESTELA. Get down! Make some room for me!

CARMEN. I don't see what you could possibly see in him.

ESTELA. He's cute and he likes me.

CARMEN. He doesn't even have good *nalgas*. They're this small. (*She exemplifies with her hands.*)

ANA. Amá, why are you so preoccupied with the size of a man's butt?

ROSALI. That's not what counts.

CARMEN. Because your father doesn't have any. *(ESTELA goes to the door and opens it. She fixes herself a bit and stands in front of the door.)*

PANCHACHA. Estela, I thought you said that door was going to remain closed.

ROSALI. Estela, get away from the door, because if the van passes they'll just see the nopal on your forehead and take you away.

ESTELA. But he wants to talk to me. He sent me a letter. *(ESTELA leaves, closing the door. CARMEN and PANCHACHA are still eating their tacos. They stick to the window like flies.)*

CARMEN. What could he be telling her? She's laughing her head off.

ROSALI. ¡Miren cómo coquetea! What a flirt. You never suspected she had it in her.

PANCHACHA. She's worse than Ana.

ANA. What's that suppose to mean? *(CARMEN holds her taco carelessly and the mole spills out onto some dresses.)*

PANCHACHA. ¡Mire, Doña Carmen! You're spilling the mole!

ANA. Amá, Estela is going to kill you!

CARMEN. ¡Ayy, no! *(CARMEN quickly puts the taco on the table. She grabs a cloth and tries to clean the dresses.)*

PANCHACHA. ¡Aguas! Here she comes!

CARMEN. What am I going to do?

ANA *(runs to the door and locks it)*. Quick, Amá. Hide the dresses! We'll clean them later.

CARMEN. ¿Dónde los escondo?

ROSALI. Anywhere! *(ESTELA tries to open the door. While the women run around hysterically trying to find the best place to hide the dresses.)*

ESTELA. Let me in.

ANA. Who is it?

ESTELA. You know who it is!

ANA. I don't know who. *(She gestures to the women to hurry.)*

You think we should open the door? What if it's la migra?

ESTELA. Ana, open the door! *(She pounds on the door.)*

ANA. How do we know it's you?

*(ESTELA finally knocks the secret code and ANA lets her in.)*

ESTELA. When the cat is away the mice come out to play. What were you doing?

WOMEN. Nothing!

CARMEN. Ahora sí. Show us the letter first, and tell us what you talked about.

ESTELA. It's private.

ROSALI. Come on, Estela, no te hagas de rogar, you know you want to show it to us.

ESTELA. ¡Que metiches! This letter is for me. He only intended for me to read it...All right, I'll read it out loud. *(The WOMEN pull out their chairs and get comfortable. ESTELA clears her throat and reads the letter dramatically.)* "Dear Estela..." *(The WOMEN get excited after the first "Dear.")* "Dear Estela...How I dig you. Let me count the waves."

ROSALI. Ahhh, it's a poem.

ESTELA. "Wave one: 'cause you look real nice when you pass by me and say, 'Hi.' Wave two: 'cause you seem real smart. Wave three: 'cause your eyes are like fresas. And your lips are like mangos, juicy and delicious, listos para chupar."

PANCHACHA. Maybe he works at the supermarket in the fruit section.



ESTELA (*continues*). "So how about it? You wanna go cruising down Whittier Boulevard, see a movie, or anything else you wanna do?" I told him I liked the letter a lot. So we're going to the movies tonight.

ROSALI. To the movies? It sounds serious. But be careful with those wandering hands.

ESTELA. He's not that kind of guy.

CARMEN. So what are you going to wear? Don't go dressing up like a scarecrow now.

ESTELA. I don't dress like that.

CARMEN. That's why you scare them away.

ESTELA. Como es, Amá. He likes me for me. Didn't you hear? He said I'm intelligent. He doesn't care how I dress.

CARMEN. Estela, let me make you a dress, *horitita te lo coso*.

ESTELA. No. I can dress myself. And anyway, what are we doing sitting around. Lunch is over. Let's get to work. ¡A trabajar! (*Lights fade out.*)

### SCENE THREE

AT RISE: *Lights fade in. The WOMEN are busy working in their designated working areas. PANCHA is by the racks attaching strings to hang the dresses.*

ANA. Estela, there are no more dresses to iron. What else should I do?

ESTELA. Ah...Pancha, can you show Ana what you are doing? (*ANA goes to the racks. ROSALI turns on the radio.*)

PANCHA (*showing ANA*). Así hazlo. This way. (*ANA quickly understands what she has to do and begins her work. The*

*phone rings. ESTELA picks it up. On the radio we hear the following:*)

RADIO (*voice-over*). It's 3:45 and another hot, beautiful day in L.A. This is KLOVE—Radio Amor...Now back to our talk show, "Esperanza."

ESPERANZA (*voice-over*). For those of you who just joined us today we are discussing abusive spouses. We have our last caller on the line. Caller, are you there?

CALLER (*voice-over*). Hi. I'm not going to give you my name because my husband listens to this station. I wanted to know what I can do to...Well, I want to know how I can talk to my husband when he gets angry.

ESPERANZA (*voice-over*). How long has he been abusive?

CALLER (*voice-over*). Ah...Well, he wasn't like this when we got married...He was always sweet. So I don't know what has happened to him. He tells me if I did whatever he asked he wouldn't have to hit me. But I do what he says and it's still not good enough. Last time he hit me because...

PANCHA (*switches the dial on the radio*). Isn't there anything else?

CARMEN. Pobre mujer, I'm lucky mi viejo doesn't hit me.

ANA. Lucky? Why lucky? It should be expected that he doesn't. That woman should leave her husband. Women have the right to say "no."

PANCHA. You think it's that easy?

ANA. No, she's probably dependent on him financially, or the church tells her to endure, or she's doing it for the children.

PANCHA. You're so young. Did it ever occur to you that maybe she loves him?

ANA. I'm sure she does. But we can't allow ourselves to be abused anymore. We have to assert ourselves. We have to

realize that we have rights! We have the right to control our bodies. The right to exercise our sexuality. And the right to take control of our destiny. But it all begins when we start saying...(ANA quickly climbs on top of a sewing machine to continue preaching.)...¡Ya basta! No more! We should learn how to say no! Come on, Amá, say it! Say it!

CARMEN. What?

ANA. Say it! "No!"

CARMEN. Okay, I won't.

ANA. Amá, say "No!"

CARMEN (as in she won't). No.

ANA. Good! Rosalí, say it.

ROSALI (casually). ¿Pues por qué no? No.

ANA. Pancha, say it. No! (PANCHA stares at ANA, she won't say it.)

ESTELA. Ya, ya, Norma Rae, get off and get back to work!

PANCHA. Why don't you run for office? Tan pequeña and she thinks and acts like she knows everything.

ANA. I don't know everything, but I know a lot. I read a lot. But it just amazes me to hear you talk the way you do. A women's liberation movement happened 20 years ago, and you act like it hasn't even happened.

PANCHA. Mira, all those gringas shouting about liberation hasn't done a thing for me...And if you were married you would realize it. Bueno, and if you know so much how come you're not in college?

ANA. Because I don't have the money. I have to wait a year to be eligible for financial aid.

PANCHA. I always thought that if you were smart enough a college would give you a scholarship. Maybe you should read some more and get one so you don't have to be here

making 67 dollars a week and hearing us talk the way we do. (A car honking is heard outside.)

CARMEN. Ya llegó mi viejo. Ana, get ready. ¡Vámonos!

ANA. No, Amá, you go. I'll take the bus...I want to finish this last pile.

CARMEN. You do? Ah, I know why you want to stay, metiche. Bueno. Adiós.

WOMEN. Adiós. (CARMEN leaves. PANCHA collects her belongings. A car honking is heard outside.)

PANCHA. I'm leaving too.

ROSALI. Pancha, do you want a ride?

PANCHA. Sí, sí. (They get ready to leave.)

ROSALI. Adiós, Estela. Good luck on your date with your Tormento. Well, not too good. I hope you won't need to go to confession tomorrow. (ROSALI and ESTELA giggle.) Hasta mañana. (They leave. Soon after ESTELA hangs up the phone.)

ANA. So who was that?

ESTELA. María...She called to wish me a happy birthday.

ANA. Isn't it this Friday?

ESTELA. Yes, but she couldn't wait to tell me that she's getting married in three months. She wants me to make her wedding dress. (They continue working.) Ana, before el Tormento gets here you have to leave.

ANA. Why?

ESTELA. Because I don't want you writing about it. I know what you do in the bathroom.

ANA. Come on, Estela, where else can I write? I come here and all it is, is "work, work, work" from you and Amá. I go home and then she still wants me to help her cook, and clean...

ESTELA. So what are you writing?

ANA. I'm keeping a journal so when I become "rich and famous" I can write my autobiography.

ESTELA. Ana, who do you think you are? "Rich and famous."

ANA. I'm not going to be stuck here forever.

ESTELA. And I am?

ANA. No...I didn't say that. *Amá y Apá*, always said that you wouldn't do anything with your life, but you're proving them wrong. It takes a lot of guts and courage to do what you're doing. And even if you're in a mess, you have your own business, at 24! I'm very proud of you.

ESTELA (*a little embarrassed*). All right, Ana, you can stay.

ANA. So when is *el Tormento* picking you up?

ESTELA. In a few minutes. I won't even have a chance to freshen up. (*ESTELA goes to the sink and washes her face. She stares at herself in the mirror.*) Ana, do you have any makeup?

ANA. Not with me.

ESTELA (*continues to stare at herself with an excited face*). I don't have anything to wear! (*ESTELA runs to look for clothes to wear. ANA goes to the bathroom and sits on the toilet and begins to write. Spotlight on ANA.*)

ANA. Another day and we're in deep...trouble...I keep having arguments with Pancha, and even though she doesn't like me, I feel sort of sorry for her. I wish I could tell her what to do, but she won't listen to me. Like the rest of the women, she won't take me seriously. They make fun of me...So why do I stay?...It's true. I stay. Because no matter how much my mother could try and force me to come, I could decide not to come back. But I do...Why? (*Fade out.*)

(*Lights come on. ESTELA is holding the pink dress. She looks to the bathroom to see if ANA is watching. She then holds the dress to her body as if wearing it. She dances slowly with it, imagining herself dancing with el Tormento. Lights slowly fade.*)

#### SCENE FOUR

AT RISE: *Lights come on after a brief pause. On the calendar it is Tuesday, September 8, 1987. On the clock it is 7:10 a.m. Before the lights are fully on, ESTELA's crying is heard. The WOMEN are gathered around her.*

ANA. So what happened?!

ESTELA. He...He...

PANCHA. What did he do?

ESTELA. He...He...

ROSALI & ANA. What?!!

ESTELA. I don't want to talk about it! (*She pulls herself together.*) Let's forget about it and get started on the work... *Amá*, you said you were going to the bakery.

CARMEN. Ah, *sí, sí*.

ESTELA. Rosali, how are you doing with the zippers?

ROSALI. I'm halfway done.

ESTELA. Ana, turn on the iron. There are a lot more dresses that need ironing. Pancha, are you almost done with the skirts for size 3/4?

PANCHA. No. I just started that lot a few minutes before I left yesterday.

CARMEN. Does anybody want anything from the bakery?

ESTELA. I want a juice...Ana, could you...? (*ESTELA decides to look in her purse instead. She takes out all of her pennies and gives them to CARMEN.*)

CARMEN. Estela, you can tell me. What could he have possibly done to get you this upset?

ESTELA. You're so stubborn, Amá! I said nothing happened. I'm just over-reacting.

CARMEN. Just remember, I'm your mother. If you can't trust your mother, who can you trust? (*The WOMEN agree with CARMEN, but ESTELA does not give in. CARMEN leaves. Quickly after, before ANA has a chance to lock the door, CARMEN runs back in and leans on the door to close it with her body. She is breathing heavily.*) It's out there again! Like a vulture!

PANCHÁ. What?

ALL. ¡La migra! (*They gasp. They all close the curtains and bolt the doors.*)

ROSALI. Was it going by slow or was it going by fast?

CARMEN. It was going slow like it was going to turn at the corner and circle around the block and come back!

ANA. You don't know that for sure!

CARMEN. Estela, it just occurred to me. Why don't you go home and work in the garage on our old sewing machine?

ESTELA. I could do that. But I can't. I don't trust you.

ROSALI. We'll work. Just go! ¡Rápido!

ESTELA. And you'll work?

ALL. Yes!!

ESTELA. What should I take with me to work on?

ROSALI. Just go! I'll get my Jaime to take you the work. Go!

ESTELA. Okay! (*ESTELA begins to leave. She opens the door.*) He's out there! (*ESTELA runs to the bathroom.*)

ANA. Who? The man in the van?

PANCHÁ. No. ¡El Tormento!

ROSALI. Estela, come out of there! Go before they come. ¡Por favor!

CARMEN. Estela, get out of there right now! ¡No seas mena! Men are not worth crying over. And they're certainly not worth you getting deported. (*CARMEN waits for ESTELA to come out.*) Vas a verlo. ¡Entonces a la fuerza! (*CARMEN pulls on the curtain and tries to drag ESTELA out. ESTELA wraps herself with the curtain and CARMEN is unable to get her out.*)

ESTELA. No! Leave me alone! I'm not coming out!

ANA. Estela, who's that gringa he's kissing? (*The curtain flies open and ESTELA races to the door.*)

ESTELA. Who?! Where?!!

ANA. I lied. Now go home! (*ANA pushes ESTELA out the door and locks it. Beat.*)

ROSALI (*looking out of the window*). I don't think they're coming.

PANCHÁ. Are you sure you saw it, Doña Carmen?

ANA. They would have been here by now. ¿Qué no?

CARMEN. I guess so...I don't understand. (*They sigh in relief.*)

ESTELA (*offstage, knocking on the door*). Ana, let me in.

(*ESTELA knocks on the door and ANA finally lets her in.*)

ESTELA. I'm going to stay.

CARMEN. All right. (*ESTELA closes the door, locks it. The WOMEN begin working; machines roar.*)

ANA. Shit! I wish we had a fan here. (*ANA turns on the radio.*)

ESTELA. I don't want the dresses getting dirty with the dust. (*Lights fade.*)

## SCENE FIVE

AT RISE: *Lights come on. The WOMEN are busy working. ANA goes to the bathroom. She sits on the toilet and starts writing in her journal. Spotlight on ANA.*

ANA. It feels just as bad as when I was doing the fries at McDonald's. Pouring frozen sticks of potatoes into boiling lard and the steam hitting my face for \$3.35 an hour...This place stinks! I hate going to the store and having to climb over the winos, and ignore the catcalls of the sexist dope addicts and the smell of urine and marijuana on the street, and...I went to the store today and I saw an old friend. She's pregnant, again. She says she's happy and she doesn't care if she's on welfare. When she was still in high school she told me she knew I was going to do something with my life. I don't want her to know I work here.

*(Lights come back on. The WOMEN shift in their chairs, uncomfortable with the heat in their buttocks. ROSALI fans herself and notices that CARMEN has an odd facial expression.)*

ROSALI. Doña Carmen, why do you have that strange look on your face?

CARMEN. I reached over to get the next dress and I felt something moving inside. I think I'm pregnant.

PANCHÁ. Don't say that, Doña Carmen, or I'll lose faith in God. You're almost 50 and already have eight children, I'm barely 32 and can't have any.

CARMEN. Isn't that odd, I'm suppose to be an abuelita by now. *Pero no puede ser*, it can't be.

ESTELA. Amá, don't tell me you still have sex? At your age and in your physical condition?

ANA. Cállense, I heard something on the news about a raid. *(The WOMEN listen to the radio.)*

RADIO *(voice-over)*. KNXW News all the time...The time now is 2:35 p.m. Twenty illegal aliens were captured today at the Goodnight pillow factory...

PANCHÁ. That's only a few blocks away!

RADIO *(voice-over)*. The INS was given a tip by anonymous sources yesterday of the factory's illegal hiring of aliens. The owner was fined up to 2,000 dollars per alien... *(PANCHÁ, CARMEN, and ROSALI do the sign of the holy cross.)*

CARMEN. Estela, why don't you call the Glitz company and ask them, no, demand that they pay you for the past order of dresses. Even if they were late, they still have to pay us. You have to get the money. *(The radio is still on.)*

ESTELA. I don't want to be too pushy. They're the only company that has been willing to give us a contract.

CARMEN. Then do it for Pancha and Rosalí. You haven't paid them and las pobrecitas can't even buy groceries.

ROSALI *(lying)*. I'm all right, don't worry about me.

ANA. Well, I'm not. Estela, just call. *(ESTELA thinks about it, then she decides to do it.)*

ESTELA. Here I go. *(ANA turns off the radio. ESTELA dials the number on the phone and waits.)*

PANCHÁ. ¿Saben qué? My neighbor who works at the Del Monte canning factory is missing. I have a feeling they deported her. I'm so scared that I'll be waiting for the bus one day and they'll take me.

CARMEN. But you're legal.

PANCHÁ *(realizing)*. Ayy, I keep forgetting.

ESTELA. Hello...Can I speak to Mrs. Glitz?...Hello, this is Estela. Estela Garcia...No, but we're almost finished...I know we agreed that you would pay me for the last two weeks this Friday, but I was wondering, maybe, if it isn't too much trouble, if I could get an advance check...today...I know...I know...You're right, Mrs. Glitz...Ah...But my workers...I know, but I've got a lawyer working on that...I'll get it to you by next week...No, I mean it this time. Next week...Okay, Mrs. Glitz...I'm sorry...Yes, I'll see you on Friday. *(ESTELA hangs up. Her face expresses worry and fear.)*

CARMEN. ¿Qué te dijo la vieja?

PANCHACHA. What did she tell you?

ESTELA. She asked about my proof of employment papers again. Then she warned me that if la migra shuts us down, she won't pay us for all the work we've done.

CARMEN. ¡Mendiga vieja!

ANA. Do you think she would really do that? *(CARMEN and ESTELA talk among themselves.)*

ESTELA. Amá, why is this happening to me? I'm going to get deported, aren't I, Amá?

CARMEN. Mira, supposing you do get deported, we'll get a coyote to smuggle you back in. Somehow we'll find the money.

ESTELA. But I would have let you and everybody down. I'll lose everything that I've worked for, the factory, and my self-respect. And I don't know if I can start again.

CARMEN. Estela, your Apá was thrown back to Mexico four times, but he kept coming back. If you did it once, you can do it again.

ESTELA. I hope so. *(ESTELA pulls herself together and continues working. She picks up a bundle of sewn skirts and looks at them. She discovers that they have been sewn*

*wrong.)* Pancha, do you realize you sewed all of the size 3/4 skirts backwards?

PANCHACHA. I did? No, I didn't!

ESTELA. Look! This is the outside of the material and this is the inside. Have you been doing all the lots this way?

PANCHACHA. I think so.

ESTELA. ¡Ay, no! More repairs! Pancha, please do them again.

PANCHACHA. No! It's so hot. I don't even feel like working.

How do you expect us to work with this heat?

ESTELA. Pancha, I'll help you take them apart.

ANA. Couldn't you open the door?

ESTELA. No!

PANCHACHA. I can't work like this.

ESTELA. We're going to have to. *(PANCHACHA grabs the skirt and begins to take them apart. ESTELA is looking at another lot and discovers the stained dresses that CARMEN hid.)* ¡Amá! What did I tell you about the mole?! *(ESTELA shoves a dress in CARMEN's face.)*

CARMEN. The stains are not so obvious. I was going to clean them, I swear. I didn't want you to see them and get worried.

ESTELA. It's going to be hell trying to take the stains out! *(ESTELA catches ANA accidentally burning the tul.)* Not so close! You're burning the tul! Pay close attention to your work or don't do it. Have you been burning it on the other dresses too?! *(ESTELA quickly looks at the dresses on the racks and those that ANA has finished ironing.)*

ANA. I thought if I did it this way it would be okay and save us time. I can't stand the heat and the steam.

ESTELA. Can't any of you do anything right? Do I have to do everything myself so that these dresses get finished? *(PANCHACHA gets busy pulling on the two pieces of material*

*on the skirt instead of cutting the sewn thread one stitch at a time.)* Pancha, don't pull on them or you'll tear them. I said I was going to help you do the repairs.

PANCHA. I want to get out of here and go home.

ESTELA. You have to finish this work.

PANCHA. Not in this heat!

ANA. Estela, please open the door!

ESTELA. For the last time, I won't!

PANCHA. Then I'll open it. *(PANCHA walks determinedly towards the door. ESTELA stands in her way.)* We're all burning in here. I'm getting dizzy.

ESTELA. I'm sorry it's so hot, but the van may be out there and I don't want them to see anything.

PANCHA. It's so selfish of you to keep the door closed when we are all burning!

ESTELA. I'm burning too!

PANCHA. But you're the one with the criminal record! It's not fair that we are all paying for your fault. We are all legal now!

ESTELA. Then go! Open the door, then leave.

PANCHA. All right! I'll leave, but with my work. *(PANCHA grabs the skirts, begins pulling on them, tearing the material.)* Let's see what else I've done. *(PANCHA continues tearing. ESTELA tries to stop her by holding PANCHA's hands. PANCHA and ESTELA begin to get physical, almost ready to strike each other. ROSALI quickly steps between them to prevent them from hitting each other.)*

CARMEN. Estela, ¡párale!

ROSALI. ¡Basta! ¡No se peleén! *(ROSALI faints and falls to the floor. ESTELA and PANCHA stop fighting.)*

CARMEN. Rosalí!

ANA. Rosalí, are you all right?

CARMEN. What could be wrong with her?

PANCHA. It's this pinche heat! It's your fault, Estela. Here you have us all locked up! See what happened?!

ESTELA *(shakes ROSALI, who does not respond)*. Rosalí, please wake up!

PANCHA. Let's take her to the hospital!

CARMEN. ¡¿Pero que locura?! The hospital is three blocks away. We can't carry her, la migra is going to see us.

PANCHA. Ayy sí, ¿entonces qué quiere? You want her to die?

CARMEN. She's not going to die!

PANCHA. And how do you know?

CARMEN. Don't exaggerate! *(While PANCHA and CARMEN argue, ANA thinks quickly of what to do. She searches around the bathroom for something. She finds ESTELA's perfume and grabs some tissue. ANA uses it to wake up ROSALI. ROSALI becomes conscious and PANCHA and CARMEN finally stop arguing.)*

ROSALI. Ah...

PANCHA. Rosalí, you want to go to the hospital?

ROSALI. ¿Qué páso?

CARMEN. M'ija, you fainted.

ANA. Are you okay?

ROSALI. Sí...Sí...I'm okay.

PANCHA. I'm gonna take you home.

ROSALI. I'll just rest a little...I'll feel better...

PANCHA. You can't continue working like this. I'll take you home. It's no bother, because I'm going home myself. *(CARMEN gets a glass of water and an aspirin.)*

CARMEN. Pobrecita, here, drink this.

ESTELA. Rosalí, I'm sorry.

PANCHA *(helps ROSALI up)*. Where's your bag? *(ROSALI points to it. PANCHA gets the bag.)* Let's go. *(PANCHA*

*leaves with ROSALI without hesitation or saying good-bye.  
ESTELA fights the urge to cry.)*

ESTELA *(to herself)*. I'm sorry, Rosalí.

CARMEN. Don't blame yourself. Something like this was going to happen.

ANA. Isn't Rosalí the only one who knows how to set up the over-lock machine? *(ANA and CARMEN look at each other worried. ESTELA has an expression of hopelessness. Lights slowly fade out.)*

#### END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

### SCENE ONE

AT RISE: CARMEN and ESTELA are the only ones present, working silently. On the clock it is 8:15 a.m. On the calendar it is Wednesday, September 9, 1987.

CARMEN. I don't think Pancha's coming back.

ESTELA. She's only an hour late. Maybe she went to visit Rosalí at her house.

CARMEN. Pancha is never late. *(Footsteps are heard outside. Then the code knock is heard. ESTELA smiles and goes to open the doors.)*

ESTELA. See, Amá! I knew she would come. *(ESTELA rushes to open the door. ANA is at the door.)* Oh, it's just you.

*(ANA quickly comes in carrying a brown paper bag with detergent which she puts on the table.)*

ANA. ¡Miren! Come look out the window. There's this strange homeless person outside. *(They go look.)*

CARMEN. What's so strange about him?

ANA. I don't recognize him.

ESTELA. So?

ANA. I think he's just disguised. He doesn't look desperate enough.

CARMEN. I've never seen him before.

ANA. I think he's a spy?



ESTELA. A spy?

ANA. Look! There's Pancha!

ESTELA. God! Thank you! She's come back!

CARMEN. But look, he's talking to her and she's pointing this way! *(They drop to the floor. A few seconds later they go back to looking.)* I wonder what he's asking her?

ESTELA. I wonder what she's telling him?

ANA. ¡Aguas! Here she comes.

*(They scatter. ANA takes out the stain remover from the bag. CARMEN goes back to sewing. The code knock is heard and ESTELA opens the door. PANCHA comes in.)*

ESTELA. Pancha, what did the bum ask you?

PANCHA. The bum? Ooo. He asked me where your Tormento lives.

ANA. I guess he wasn't a spy after all.

PANCHA. ¡N'ombre! He's just another one of his vago friends.

CARMEN. ¡Bola de viejos cochinos! No good drug addicts!

ESTELA. Ya! Stop talking about him!

CARMEN. Are you defending him? After what he did?

ANA *(aside)*. Amá, Estela finally told you?

CARMEN. No. I'm trying to get it out of her.

ESTELA. Forget it! I'll never tell you what happened on the date.

ANA. Okay, Estela. Be like that. I'll never tell you anything either. *(ESTELA doesn't budge. ANA and CARMEN give up.)*

CARMEN. Panchita, we were afraid you wouldn't come back.

PANCHA. Why?

CARMEN. Well, after what happened yesterday.

PANCHA. I have to come to work even if I don't want to...I went to visit Rosali this morning.

ANA. How is she doing?

PANCHA. She's doing better.

ESTELA. Is there any chance of her coming back this week?

PANCHA. No se. She looks pale. This heat will be bad for her. I'm surprised I didn't faint myself.

ESTELA. Maybe I will get a fan.

PANCHA. Estela, what do you want me to work on?

ESTELA. I don't know how we are going to manage without her. Pancha, please finish the zippers that Rosali was working on.

CARMEN. Estela, give me the manual for the over-lock machine. I'm going to try and set it up myself.

ESTELA. Alli esta en el cajon. We'll just have to go on without her. Ana, did you get the stain remover?

ANA. It's on the table. How many dresses need washing?

ESTELA. Twelve. I should put my mother to wash them, but since she'll be busy with the over-lock I guess I'll do them.

ANA. How many dresses have we finished?

ESTELA. They're on the racks. And there are a couple in that box that just need ironing.

ANA *(looking at the racks)*. That's all?

ESTELA. I found ten dresses with the tul burnt in them. Those were almost finished, but now the tul has to be replaced.

ANA. I guess I'll do that.

ESTELA. Amá, can you stay late today?

CARMEN. Pues sí.

ESTELA. Ana, will you stay late too?

ANA. Stay late?...Sure. *(ANA irons a dress carefully and slowly. ESTELA observes ANA for a few seconds.)*

ESTELA. Ana, can you iron faster? Just make them look decent. *(ANA frowns at her suggestion and looks to PANCHA who is attaching hanging strings on the dresses next to her.)*

ANA *(to PANCHA)*. It's not that I don't iron fast enough, it's that whenever I finish ironing a dress I stop for a minute to really look at it. I never realized just how much work, puro lomo, as my mother would say, went into making it. Then I imagine the dress at Bloomingdale's and I see a tall and skinny woman looking at it. She instantly gets it and with no second thoughts she says "charge it!" She doesn't think of the life of the dress before the rack, of the labor put into it. I shake the dress a little and try to forget it's not for me. I place a plastic bag over it then I put it on the rack and push it away. It happens to me with every dress.

PANCHA. What an imagination. So what are you gonna study when you go to college next year? Where are you going?

ANA. To New York University. I'm going to study writing.

CARMEN. Así es que you better be quiet, don't tell her any chisme or one day you're gonna read about it.

PANCHA. And you think you'll make it?

ANA. I think so.

PANCHA. Pos, I do think you're a bit loquita, but if that's what you need. I think you'll make it.

ANA. Gracias, Pancha. *(PANCHA smiles at ANA seeing her differently for the first time. Meanwhile, CARMEN is frustrated with the over-lock machine.)*

CARMEN. ¡Ayy no! ¡No puedo! I try and I try and I can't! ¡Esta cochinada no sirve!

ESTELA. But what can we do? Who else could do it? Can you do it, Pancha?

PANCHA. I don't know anything about those new machines.

ESTELA. Amá, give me the manual. *(ESTELA grabs the manual and begins to work on the machine. Talking to the*

*machine:)* Please, maquinita. If you behave I'll put on you all the oil you want. Maquinita, if you love me, help me.

CARMEN *(touching her stomach)*. Ana, come here, quick. Feel my stomach. *(ANA puts her hand over CARMEN's stomach.)* Can you feel the baby kicking?

ANA. No... Amá, are you sure you're pregnant?

CARMEN. I think so. Aver, Pancha, tell me if you feel anything.

PANCHA. I'm busy, Doña Carmen.

CARMEN. Just come quick, Panchita. Ana doesn't believe me. *(PANCHA gets up from her chair and goes over to CARMEN. She places her hand on CARMEN's stomach.)*

PANCHA. I don't feel anything. I think the heat is getting to you too.

CARMEN. ¿Cómo puede ser? I can feel it! *(PANCHA nods her head and walks away fanning herself. She heads to the bathroom.)*

ANA. How many months should you be pregnant by now? I haven't noticed you getting any bigger.

CARMEN. I don't know. I've always been fat. I haven't noticed either.

ANA. Have you the symptoms?

CARMEN. Not all of them, but I've been pregnant enough times to know.

ANA. Are you going to keep it?

CARMEN. What do you mean?

ANA. You don't have to have it.

CARMEN. Ana, I don't want to talk about this.

*(Spotlight on PANCHA. PANCHA stands on the toilet in front of the small window. She opens the window and bathes her face with the breeze. PANCHA begins to cry.)*

PANCHA. Que bonito viento. Wind, that's what I am. *(Touching her stomach.)* Empty, like an old rag...*(Praying.)* Diosito, why don't you make me a real woman? If I can't have children, why did you make me a woman? *(PANCHA wipes her tears.)*

*(Lights come on.)*

ESTELA *(talking to the machine)*. Maquinita, I'm going to set you up even if it's the last thing I do in this country. *(She holds the manual and follows directions.)* All right. Five threads. They all start from their spools onto the holes, then straight down, into the loops. Then they turn, go in between more loops underneath, then they all go into their needles. Then the electricity comes on...*(She turns on the machine.)*...I insert a piece of material, step on the pedal and...Ta-da! A chain of interwoven threads! I did it!

CARMEN. You fixed it? ¿Pero cómo?

ESTELA. I persisted and I did it!

CARMEN. ¡Mira que inteligente!

ANA. That's great, Estela! Now we don't have to worry about it anymore. *(They hear footsteps outside. They instantly freeze and become silent. They look to each other then CARMEN, ANA, and PANCHA quickly go to their purses. Someone is heard outside, then letters are slipped in through the mail slot. The WOMEN relax.)* Just the mailman...

*(The WOMEN suddenly realize that it probably means bad news for ESTELA. ESTELA picks up an envelope and reads it. No one asks what it says out of respect for her, but they all know it's another letter from the lawyer. ESTELA opens it and is about to read it when they hear foot-*

*steps outside. They grab their "Temporary Employment" cards from their purses. ESTELA hides behind CARMEN. Then the code knock is heard. The WOMEN rush to the door. ESTELA opens the door and ROSALI is behind the bar door.)*

EVERYONE. What are you doing here?!

ESTELA. Aren't you suppose to be resting?

ROSALI. I was in bed and I kept imagining Estela getting deported. So I had to come back. I know how badly you must need the over-lock machine.

ESTELA. I fixed it!

ROSALI *(disappointed)*. You did? Well, where are the zippers so I can get started now?

PANCHA. I finished all the zippers.

ROSALI. You did?

ESTELA. Rosalí, I'd rather you go back and get well.

ROSALI. No, Estela, I'm fine. I can help.

ESTELA. It's not worth it if we're fighting and getting sick because of this heat.

ROSALI. It wasn't just the heat...I hadn't eaten and that's why I fainted. I didn't want you to think it was your fault.

PANCHA. But why do you need to lose weight? 'Tas flaca. *(ROSALI smiles, but doesn't believe PANCHA.)*

CARMEN. Have you eaten already, you still look pale?

ROSALI. No, I'm not hungry, Doña Carmen.

CARMEN. But that's what you have been saying and look what happened. Come on, eat something.

ROSALI. I am not hungry.

ANA. Rosalí, you can't see yourself the way we see you and that's why you think you're fat.

CARMEN. Rosalí, you need to eat something.

ROSALI. I'm not hungry!

CARMEN. You need to eat something! (*ROSALI looks at each of them and finally reveals the truth.*)

ROSALI. I'm not hungry because I've been living on diet pills.

CARMEN. So that's the secret diet? Ayy, Rosalí, don't you know those *cochinadas* are no good?

ANA. They're real bad for you because I read they're addictive.

ROSALI. I know. When I fainted I saw my body lying there, I thought I was going to die. I couldn't feel my body. And I just kept seeing Estela being deported. Estela, I want to come back to work. This is more important to me than being a size seven.

ESTELA (*embraces ROSALI*). Gracias...Can you work late?

ROSALI. Claro.

ESTELA. And you too, Pancha?

PANCHA. Pos bueno.

CARMEN. Entonces todas a trabajar! (*The WOMEN go to their sewing stations. ESTELA takes out her notebook and dictates the work.*)

ESTELA. Amá, let Rosalí do the over-lock work, she's faster. I want you to do lots size two through six. Pancha, you do lots size seven through twelve. Ana, you know what to do. (*ESTELA takes control and the WOMEN are determined to finish. The machines roar like race cars taking off. Lights slowly fade.*)

## SCENE TWO

AT RISE: *Lights come on. It is 2:00 a.m., and street sounds are heard outside. ROSALI looks around and then stares at her stomach.*

ROSALI. Did you hear that?

ANA. No, what?

ROSALI. A stomach growling. Whose stomach was it?

ESTELA. I don't know, but I'm hungry.

ANA. Me too. Amá, is there any rice left?

ROSALI. Did you hear it again?

PANCHA. Rosalí, it's your *panza*.

ROSALI. Yeah, it's me! I haven't heard my stomach growling in so long.

ESTELA. What's there to eat?

CARMEN. I might have something in my purse. Why don't we make something?

PANCHA. All this noise is driving me crazy. I'm going deaf. (*PANCHA turns on the radio. CARMEN gets up, looks around the table then in the refrigerator. All the WOMEN search in their purses for food.*)

CARMEN. Aaaa, I found something. Tortillas and...the mole!

ALL. Not the mole!

PANCHA. I've got something. (*PANCHA takes out a large amount of food from her purse. The WOMEN are surprised with every item she takes out: a box of fried chicken, a hamburger, a bag of chips, a bag of cookies, and a Diet Coke.*) I'm on a diet!

CARMEN (*aside*). Se ve. (*On the radio a "cumbia" has just finished. Then a DISC JOCKEY with a very mellow voice comes on the air.*)

DISC JOCKEY (*voice-over*). It's 2:25 a.m. on an early Thursday morning...I'm falling asleep here to pay my bills. And if you're listening now, you probably are too. So this is for you night owls! The ones that do the night shifts no one wants to do! (*The song "Tequila" blasts on the radio. The WOMEN are so sleepy, they jump around to the music trying to awaken. They eat and shake at the same time. Lights slowly fade.*)

## SCENE THREE

AT RISE: *Lights come on. It is Thursday, September 10, 1987. On the clock it is 2 p.m. The WOMEN are wearing the same clothes as the day before. As usual, it is extremely hot.*

CARMEN (*smelling her armpits*). Phueeehh! ¡Fuchi! I stink. Aquí huele a pura cuchupeta y pedo. Phuehhh! Who farted?

ESTELA. Amá, it's probably you who did it. Like they say, the one who smells it first is the one who has it underneath her skirt.

ANA. ¡Que calor! It feels like we're in hell!

PANCHÁ. How many more dresses to finish, Estela?

ESTELA. Fifteen.

ROSALI. Only fifteen?!

CARMEN. Dios mio, ya mero acabamos.

ESTELA (*counting dresses on rack*). 184, 185, 186. No, we only need 14!

ANA. What a relief! We're almost finished. (*ANA decides to take off her blouse, leaving on her sweaty bra.*)

CARMEN (*shocked at ANA's actions*). Ana, what are you doing?!

ANA. All this steam has me sweating like a pig.

CARMEN. We're sweating too, but we don't go taking our clothes off!

ANA. So why don't you? We're all women. We all have the same.

CARMEN. Not really. You have bigger chichis.

ANA. And you have a bigger panza!

CARMEN. That's because I'm pregnant!

ESTELA. You mean we're definitely going to have another baby brat to take care of?

ANA. Amá, do you really want to have it?

PANCHÁ. Doña Carmen, give it to me if you don't want it.

CARMEN. I can't just get rid of it, either way...But I don't want to have it.

PANCHÁ. But you're lucky, Doña Carmen.

CARMEN. No. It seems all I do is have children. One after another. I'm tired of this! I can't have this baby. I'll die. Last time I was pregnant the doctor said I almost didn't make it.

ANA. Amá, I didn't know that happened.

CARMEN. Every time your Apá touches me, the next day I'm pregnant. When he would leave me in Mexico to go to el norte, he would leave me pregnant so no man would look at me and desire me. I was very beautiful.

ANA. You still are, Amá.

CARMEN. I was always scared of him. And I let myself get fat after you were born hoping he would be disgusted by me and not touch me anymore.

ANA. Why didn't you just say "No"?

CARMEN. Because, M'ija, I was never taught how to say no.

PANCHA (*comes forward and confesses*). It's easy, Doña Carmen. You tell him "No!" and you get out from the bed.

ANA (*realizing what PANCHA is saying*). Pancha?

PANCHA. And then you take the blanket. (*ANA embraces PANCHA as the WOMEN laugh.*)

ANA (*to the WOMEN*). Aren't you hot in those clothes? I feel sticky. I'm going to take off my pants. (*ANA takes off her pants. She is left wearing her bra and panties.*)

CARMEN. Ana, aren't you embarrassed?

ANA. Why? You already think I'm fat.

CARMEN. You know, Ana, you're not bad looking. If you lost 20 pounds you would be very beautiful.

ANA. Story of my life...Go ahead. Pick on me.

CARMEN. Why don't you lose weight? Last time you lost weight you were so thin and beatifuller.

ANA. I like myself. Why should I?

PANCHA. Doña Carmen, Ana is very pretty. She looks good the way she is.

ANA. Thank you, Pancha.

CARMEN. It's because she's young. At this age young girls should try to make themselves as attractive as possible.

ANA. Why? Why not always? You're overweight too.

CARMEN. But I'm already married.

ANA. Is that it? Make myself attractive so that I can catch a man?

ESTELA (*sarcastically*). Ana, listen to them, learn now, "or you'll end up like Estela."

ANA. Amá, I do want to lose weight. But part of me doesn't because my weight says to everyone, "Fuck you!"

CARMEN. ¡Ave Maria Purissima!

ANA. It says, "How dare you try to define me and tell me what I have to be and look like!" So I keep it on. I don't want to be a sex object.

ESTELA. Me neither.

CARMEN. ¡Otra!

ROSALI. What's wrong with being a sex object? What's wrong with wanting to be thin and sexy?

ESTELA. Because I want to be taken seriously, to be considered a person...You know with Andrés, on our date...

CARMEN. ¡Aver cuéntanos! What happened on that infamous date?

ESTELA. On our date I got all fixed up...Then he showed up with jeans and a t-shirt and he smelled like he had been drinking...He wanted to take me to the drive-in and when I asked, "Why the drive-in?" He said because there he could kiss me and give me what I wanted...He said, "I don't care if you're fat. I like you even better; more to grab." That got me so angry! I thought he was interested in me because he was impressed that I owned this factory, my "intelligence," that I..."I'm smart"...When am I going to meet that man who will see the real me?

CARMEN. So that's what happened.

ROSALI. Pues if he has a brother, tell him about me. I think I'm going to die a virgin.

ANA. You're still a virgin?! Dang!

PANCHA. ¿Pero tu Jaime? Nothing?

ROSALI. Nothing. I've felt fat ever since I can remember and I didn't want anybody to touch me until I got thin.

ANA. Is that why you were starving yourself?

ROSALI. That's part of it.

ESTELA. Rosalí, you're not fat.

ROSALI. Of course I am. Look at my nalgas...And my hips!

Paresen de elefante.

ANA. No they don't!

ROSALI. I look like a cow.

CARMEN. You look like a cow? Where does that leave us?

*see me  
at I  
really  
am!  
you feel  
Downy*